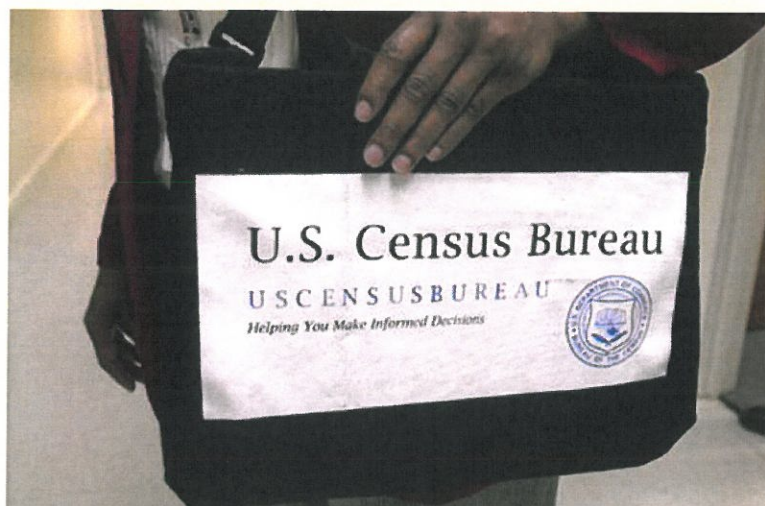


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News From Yonkers City Council President Chuck Lesnick

November 21, 2008

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EARN \$18-\$20 an Hour Just in Time for the Recession!

My office is helping to coordinate job testing sites for hundreds of Yonkers residents who can earn between \$18-\$20 an hour working for the US Census Bureau for the 2010 report.

The Decennial Census, conducted every 10 years, is a count of every person living in the United States. This count, mandated by the U.S. Constitution, determines Congressional apportionment, affects decisions at every level of government and helps determine distribution of over \$300 billion in federal funds to communities each year. It is important for Yonkers to fully count its residents in order to maximize the amount of resources we receive in the future.

Many jobs can last from several weeks up to two years, offering invaluable experience. Working for the U.S. Census Bureau provides people the chance to utilize a wide spectrum of skills. And it's a great way to serve your country.

As a temporary field employee, you will spend the next several months working out of local Census offices (LCOs), preparing to count every person living in Yonkers. (Positions are available across the United

States.)

You must live in Yonkers to work in Yonkers. Proof of residence is required. To apply, you must schedule a test (given at the times and dates below) by calling the Census Bureau Recruiting line at 1-(888) 210-8701.

Yonkers Test Sites and Dates (Times are subject to change but can be confirmed when you set up your testing appointment):

Yonkers Riverfront Library, 1 Larkin Plaza Yonkers, NY 10701:

Tuesday, Nov. 25 from 9 a.m. - 8 p.m. in Community Room B.

Tuesday, Dec. 2 from 9 a.m. - 8 p.m. in Community Room A.

Thursday, Dec. 18 from 9 a.m. - 8 p.m. in Community Room B.

Yonkers Public Library's Central Avenue Branch, 1500 Central Park Ave., Yonkers, NY 10701:

Tuesday, Nov. 25 from 4 p.m. - 9 p.m. in the Projection Room.

Thursday, Dec. 4 from Noon - 9 p.m. in the Projection Room.

Saturday, Dec. 13 from 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. in the Projection Room.

Thursday, Dec. 18 from Noon - 9 p.m. in the Projection Room.

Tuesday, Dec. 23 from 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. in the Projection Room.

In addition to field and clerical staff who will spend the next several months working out of Local Census Offices, the Census Bureau is seeking bilingual Partnership Specialists to conduct outreach in local communities.

Census Partnership Specialists are responsible for developing contacts with faith-based groups; schools; media outlets; businesses and other grassroots entities in communities within the Regional office area.

The Census Bureau is currently offering job opportunities for Partnership Specialists in diverse ethnic communities. Bilingual applicants are being sought in New York and New Jersey with the following language specialties: Spanish (Mexican, Ecuadorian, Peruvian, Dominican, Puerto Rican, Columbian, and Guatemalan dialects); Polish; Albanian; Arabic; Punjabi, Gujarati and Hindi; Urdu; Bengali; Guyanese; Senegalese; Gambian; Portuguese; Hebrew or Yiddish and Cantonese or Fukinese. The Census Bureau is also seeking Partnership Specialists in the local African American and Caribbean communities.

To apply for the Partnership Specialist positions, please visit www.census.gov. Click on Regional Offices, then click on New York, then click on Regional Employment and scroll down the page. The job links and application deadlines will appear.

CDA Approves Findings



The city's Community Development Agency (CDA) of which I am Vice Chair approved the final environmental findings plans for the Alexander Street Master Plan at a public meeting Thursday. Next, it will go to the Planning Board and the City Council for review and approval. We are hopeful that we can call a Real Estate Committee meeting on this subject in early December and take action on the

plan in January.

The plan calls for a mixed-use neighborhood with a total of 12 residential towers of which five will range from 16 to 30 stories and seven will be below 12 stories. The original plan called for 18 towers which critics said would wall off the city's waterfront.

The CDA planners also responded to public concern by putting the biggest buildings closest to our two metro-North train stations to reduce congestion.

Additionally, the plan calls for 3,752 apartments, 423,000 square feet of commercial space, 6,072 parking spaces, 17.5 acres of new parkland and other open space, which includes a waterfront esplanade. It also calls for the adaptive reuse of both the Glenwood Power Plant and the Yonkers City Jail. The project area covers 112 acres and is 1.3 miles long running north of Wells Avenue and including the John F. Kennedy Marina and Trevor Park. Almost all of the development will lie between the Hudson River and the Metro-North Railroad tracks.

Progress on SFC Continues



In other development news, the City Council approved the environmental findings for the \$1.6 billion redevelopment proposal by Struever Fidelco Cappelli this month.

The Council's next step is to negotiate the Land Disposition Agreement (LDA) involving the selling of city-owned land to accommodate the new developments and to work on the tax increment financing (TIF) proposal.

The key difference between this project and the Alexander Street Master Plan is that SFC is a specific developer with a specific plan and Alexander Street Master Plan provides a master development plan to several potential developers, some who already own specific sites in the 1.3 mile waterfront corridor.

Council Seeks Affordable Housing Compromise



Since the last e-blast asking folks for their input on the City's Affordable Housing Ordinance proposals (the Mayor's and the Council's) before the Real Estate meeting on last Tuesday, I have received much feedback for which I would like to thank those who

initially commented. As always, keep me informed as to your sentiments regarding all things Yonkers.

The good news is that the ordinance does not automatically expire on Jan. 1, 2009 without a Council vote. While the Counsel to the Administration does not agree with that opinion, they do recognize the unlikelihood of a housing development being proposed and approved during the brief period of time that the housing ordinance may or may not be in place.

Still, while the Mayor's proposal has some good elements to it, Real Estate Co-Chairs Patricia McDow and I (who together wrote the original bill) have concerns. Namely, we worry that the Mayor's proposal could allow developers to buy his/her way out of building affordable housing by making a payment to the proposed Yonkers Housing Trust Fund and that no affordable housing will be built as a result. The fund would accept payments in the amount of only one-third of the cost of building a market-rate unit to help fund other affordable housing in the city.

The Mayor's plan also proposes that affordable housing can be built at another site, meaning a developer can put up a market rate building without affordable housing in it, but rather at another location.

Among his other proposals are to:

- Reduce the minimum percentage of affordable dwelling units required in a development to 10 percent from the current sliding 10-20 percent.
- Create two classes of affordable housing. The first, rental housing, would be aimed at households with earnings up to 80 percent of Westchester's median income. The second, owner-occupied housing such as co-ops or condominiums, would be aimed at households earning up to 120 percent of the county's median income annually. The median income for a family of four in Westchester is \$101,600.
- Establish preferences for households with at least one member who works for the city, its school system or one of the hospitals within the city. Council members have expressed a desire to grant preferences to people who work for Yonkers- based non-profits, veterans, and grandparents raising grandchildren.

We believe that the Mayor's income levels may not protect those who need the most assistance and that the dollar amounts for the Housing Trust Fund are too low. We also want to protect the affordability levels on housing built from a 30-year period to a 99- year period to protect the affordable housing stock.

My office will keep you posted in this eblast and other communications. Again, please take time to review the proposals. This is very important to our city's future. Both proposals are on the [City's website](#).

Yonkers Wins Green Grant!



The Yonkers Green Policy Task Force was chosen last week as a recipient of the Fall 2008 Coca-Cola/National Recycling

Coalition Bin Grant Program, thanks to member Molly Roffman who applied for the grant.

The award will provide 75 beverage recycling bins for an 11,000 student population in the Yonkers junior and senior high schools. More than 1400 applied for the grant and 85 were chosen.

"The acquisition of these standardized, clearly recognizable bins will help meet the goals of dramatically increasing the amount of materials recycled, reducing waste and fostering awareness in the schools," said Bob Walters, chairman of the task force.

My office and the task force have been working closely with Kenneth Greehan of Yonkers DPW to enhance recycling programs throughout the public schools.

Recycling reduces the amount of garbage burned, prevents the unnecessary destruction of natural resources and will save municipalities money in garbage fees.

Chuck on Meet the Leaders

Local residents can tune into TV Channel 18 the week of Dec. 1-7 to view a program called Meet the Leaders where host Terence Michos and I discussed the economy and development surrounding Yonkers.



The show aims to explore the people, policies and issues which are responsible for directing the future course of regional communities in Westchester.

If you live elsewhere, here is the channel guide:

Southern Westchester, channel 78.
So. Westchester (EBT), channel 68.
Port Chester/Harriman, channel 18.
Ossining, channel 15.
Yorktown, channel 118.
Peekskill, channels 15 and 118.
Yorktown/Cross River, channel 22.

The Science Barge is Here!



It was a grizzly cold 3-hour tour but nonetheless worth it to ride aboard the Science Barge as it made its way up the Hudson from Chelsea Piers to Yonkers on Monday.

Now that it's here, the next step is for Groundwork Yonkers to establish corporate

sponsorship so that it remains on the Yonkers waterfront in the good tourist attraction company of the Beczak Environmental Center and the Hudson River Museum.

This past week, I organized a meeting New York Power Authority President Richard Kessel in which they committed to support the project. We expect an announcement soon as to the level of their support.

Another waterfront neighbor, Domino Sugar Inc., as well as Consolidated Edison Inc., also are "very interested" in supporting the project.

Thanksgiving Donations



It has come to my office's attention that the shelter at My Sister's Place, with whom we do a lot of work, has no donations for their Thanksgiving dinner drive which normally feeds more than 25 families.

If you care to donate food items or turkey gift cards, please see Carol Bengis in City Hall in room 403 or call her at 914-377-6060 by Tuesday.

Goodbye to a Political Legend



News that former Texas Attorney General Jim Mattox passed away this week was met with sadness, as I worked for him as a student intern when Jim was a Congressman 30 years ago.

I last saw him at the Texas Delegation of the Democratic National Convention this summer. True to his style, Jim walked over, clapped me on

the back and shook my hand while we reminisced about his 1978 vote to help bail out New York City from its fiscal municipal bond crises.

Jim will be remembered as a straight-shooter who really cared about the people he served. That's why he was called "the people's lawyer."

To read his obituary, [click here](#).

Teddys Tonight



The Untermeyer Performing Arts Council presents UPAC ON THE ROAD featuring The Teddys tonight, Friday, Nov. 21 at 7:30 p.m. at the Mark Twain School, 160 Woodlawn Avenue, Yonkers.

The Teddys are a versatile 5-piece band fronted by three girls who just really want to have fun - and when they sing, you know it!

The group's engaging show consists of music from the 60's through today's current hits, complete with costumes and choreography.

Admission is free.

Go Green Event



Montefiore Medical Center challenged its employees at the South Westchester Executive Park Yonkers location this week to carpool or take public transit for 12 weeks, beginning

Nov. 24, in

response to County Executive Andy Spano's call for businesses to help stop global warming. About 70 are expected to participate.

"I commend Montefiore for this effort to get its employees to be part of the grassroots effort to reduce our carbon footprint. Every one of us must do our part," said Spano, who earlier this year released a comprehensive Global Warming Action plan for Westchester that involves all sectors: individuals, businesses, schools, governments, non profits.

The commute challenge calls for employees to agree to "go green" in their commute at least two days a week for 12 weeks. Green commute means using public transit, carpooling, vanpooling, biking or walking. Montefiore is the first business to take up the challenge guided by Westchester County's SMART COMMUTE Program. Others are expected to join up as the program is brought to other work sites.

At the end of the challenge, Montefiore hospital will be able to capture the total vehicle miles reduced as well as the carbon emission saved by this effort.

The hospital's employee population at the Yonkers location is expected to increase to over 1,000 by early 2009, and the county's Bee-Line is looking at ways to improve transit connection to this high density worksite.

The county's Global Warming Action Plan is available at www.westchestergov.com/globalwarming

Photo cap: Andy Spano with Commissioner of Transportation Larry Sally.



Written by Laura Fahrenthold

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